

Hoosier Initiative for Re-Entry

A cooperative effort designed to assist ex-offenders in finding employment and improving their lives.

Key Facts

- ▶ Annually, nearly 20,000 offenders are released from Indiana prisons.
- ▶ The current 3-year recidivism rate is 34.7%.
 - The economic impact of recidivism reaches far beyond the dollar cost associated with their return to a DOC facility.
- ▶ Recidivism is strongly correlated with both education and employment:

<u>Education at Release</u>	<u>Return Rate–Employed</u>	<u>Return Rate–Not Employed</u>
College	17.3	26.3
HSD/GED	23.3	38.4
Below HSD/GED	28.5	44.7

- ▶ Recidivism decreases at all education levels when an ex-offender gets a job.
- ▶ 71% of private businesses indicate they are unlikely to hire an ex-offender.

WorkOne



Key Facts

- ▶ Indiana's unemployment rate is down from its peak. Nevertheless, while the unemployment rate remains high by historical standards, employers remain challenged to find skilled, reliable workers.
- ▶ Approximately 20,000 offenders are released from Indiana prisons annually. Many are motivated to improve their prospects through employment.
- ▶ A program that targets hand-picked offenders for employment in Indiana companies is a win-win proposition—for employers seeking good workers, for offenders seeking to change their lives, and for Hoosier tax payers.

What is the Hoosier Initiative for Re-Entry Program?

- ▶ The Ex-Offender Employment Program is an employment based program to directly link employers with Qualified and Screened individuals.

Employer Based Needs

- Statewide DWD is hiring 12 dedicated Ex-offender Reentry Coordinators
- Reentry Coordinators work with local employers to identify
 - Willingness to discuss the possibility of hiring ex-offenders
 - Ability to hire ex-offenders
 - Necessary qualifications for prospective employees
- Respect employers limits and comfort level when considering hiring ex-offenders

Candidate Selection

DOC Selection Process

- ▶ Series of data base filters based on positive candidate traits and performance while incarcerated;
 - GED or higher
 - Exemplary conduct – no disciplinary issues
 - No known gang affiliations
 - Greater than 2 years committed sentence
- ▶ Candidate application submission and letter of recommendation;
- ▶ DOC Selection Committee review and recommendation

Initial review resulted in over 1 200 potential candidates each quarter



Pre-Release Activities

- Workshops delivered 3 to 6 months prior to release
- Newly designed curriculum
 - Workshops focusing on employment preparedness instruction
 - Delivered by Ex-Offender Reentry Employment Coordinator
 - Resume, Computer Skills, Interviewing...
 - Soft Skills – Workplace conflict resolution
 - Communication – How to discuss incarceration with potential employers.

Program Elements

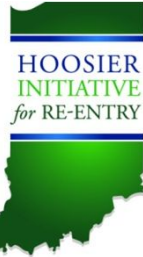
Candidate Selection:

- ▶ Governed by positive candidate history, activities and traits
- ▶ Rigorous screening process
- ▶ Repeated and periodic interviews/case management by DOC
- ▶ Review Board

Employment Services: (pre and post release)

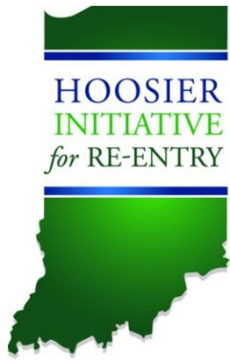
- ▶ Dedicated program-coordinators in targeted Economic Growth Regions;
- ▶ Pre-employment screening and job/qualifications matching;
- ▶ Job/workplace readiness and conflict resolution training;
- ▶ Case management and counseling by WorkOne staff;
- ▶ Additional case management and supportive services by non-profits.

WorkOne



Employment Incentives

- ▶ Federal work bonds up to \$25,000 in coverage;
- ▶ Federal Work Opportunity Tax Credit up to \$2,400/worker;
- ▶ Seeking potential funding for On-the-Job Training wage reimbursement.



Contact Information

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